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ABSTRACT

Changes in undergraduate degree production from 1972-76 at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Oswego were studied. The college has moved steadily toward becoming a multipurpose liberal arts college and it serves a sizeable number of students who begin their post-high school careers in community, agricultural, and technical units of SUNY. Data are presented concerning the extent to which the division of arts and sciences has been granting an increasing proportion of total degrees conferred. Proportional increases and decreases in degrees granted between 1972 and 1976 are shown for Oswego College, all of SUNY, and the entire state. It is recommended that the needs of transfer students be analyzed. (SW)

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State University of New York
College at Oswego

Office of Institutional Research

Research Report

Changes in Degrees Granted at Oswego Over Five Years, 1972-76

By
Herbert Garber, Ph.D., Director

May, 1977

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Changes in Degrees Granted at Oswego Over Five Years, 1972-76

Introduction

Oswego had enjoyed a decade of positive growth since it began an era as a liberal arts college. In the past two or three years, the resources available have stabilized. At the same time, the numbers of students who were admitted and enrolled reached a plateau.

Now it may be important to know how many of these students earn bachelor's degrees.

Many factors affect the output of degrees. This study does not attempt to differentiate between "native" and "in-transfer" students who obtain Oswego degrees. The reader is cautioned to keep in mind that native students (those who enter here as beginning freshmen) tend to leave without a degree in increasing numbers. Approximately 43 percent of the freshmen who entered in the fall of 1972 either earned their degrees or were still enrolled here 10 semesters later. The other 57 percent had either been disqualified or had left Oswego in good standing.

We do not have parallel descriptions on the students who entered as transfer students. It is expected that they tend to earn degrees here with greater frequency than do "native" students.[1] We will show, later, that these phenomena are probably not peculiar to Oswego alone.

Undergraduate Degrees

The year 1975-76 witnessed the turning point in the balance between liberal arts and professional studies at this college. Slightly more than half the bachelor's degrees conferred were in the division of arts and sciences (Figure one).

Also, during the half decade studied, the total number of degrees granted reached a peak in 1972-73 (1655); then began a gradual decline in total numbers conferred. The decline was not equal in rate between the two divisions. Except for 1973-74, arts and sciences degrees have shown a small increase in each of the five years (see bottom line, Table one). Meanwhile, professional studies had conferred between three and ten percent <u>fewer</u> each year (bottom line, Table two).

[1] According to another study from this office, "Students Who Withdrew from Oswego," May, 1977, other units of SUNY experience similar migrations between units.

Steady and Growing Programs

Certain degree programs tend to continue to graduate a reasonable number of students (10 or more) or are experiencing an increase in numbers graduated. Inspection of Tables one and two reveal these highlights:

Arts and Sciences

Steady State	Growing
Anthropology	Biology
Art	Communication Studies
Chemistry	Psychology
Computer Science	Public Justice
Geography	Zoology
Meteorology	
Music	
Political Science	
Spanish	
Theatre	

Professional Studies

Steady State	Growing
Industrial Arts	Business Admin.

TABLE THREE shows to what extent the division of arts and sciences has been granting an increasing proportion of total degrees conferred; from .39 in 1972 to .51 in 1976. We can expect relative stability for the next two years.perhaps. This is so because the department of business administration (Professional Studies Division) continues to increase its output while other professional studies programs decrease theirs or hold steady. Students evidently have attended to the employment market with care. Elementary and secondary education are buyers' markets and business administration and industrial arts education continue to be the places to sell the appropriate talent and skill. Meanwhile, arts and sciences' degree output seems to have plateaued.

Oswego Compared to the Rest of the State

To put Oswego's experience in perspective, it may be helpful to compare our total output changes with those occurring at other New York institutions.

TABLE FOUR shows the proportional increases and decreases in degrees granted between 1972 and 1976. The bottom three rows show these changes for Oswego, all of SUNY, and the entire state, respectively. As one can see, SUNY and the entire state attained the greatest increase between 1972 and 1973. This was followed by insignificant gains for the following years. Meanwhile, Oswego reached its peak gain in the same time period and then began a slight downward drift,which is, practically speaking, a plateau.

Sources of Transfer Students

Since roughly 50 percent of the students who entered as freshmen withdrew or were disqualified without graduating, we may want to know where the students came from who replaced them. These would be the students who enable Oswego and certain of the other SUNY arts and sciences colleges to grant more degrees than their freshman classes alone can yield.[2]

TABLE FIVE shows the proportion of the transfer students who entered these colleges in the fall of 1974 by the type of college from which they came. Fall 1974 is chosen because most in-transfers are nearly junior level and they would be among those who would complete a degree by June, 1976.

As one can see, Oswego accepts a greater proportion of in-transfers from other SUNY units (.87) than the other colleges. Also, 80 percent of these students come here from two year SUNY colleges.

These students evidently persist at Oswego at a fairly high rate. Only about 600 of the degrees granted in 1975-76 were awarded to the freshman native cohort of 1972. An unknown, but probably small, number of students from previous classes joined with in-transfers to compose the 1544 graduates. These transfers must have numbered about 900. A sizeable group, indeed.

Conclusions

1. Oswego conferred its greatest number of degrees during 1972-73.

2. The division of Arts and Sciences now confers the majority of bachelor's degrees.

3. Biology, Business Administration, Communication Studies, Psychology, Public Justice, and Zoology are the programs which continue to increase the numbers of degrees conferred.

4. Although "native" undergraduates withdraw in good standing in substantial numbers, this college and most of her sister SUNY units confer more bachelor's degrees than would be expected from the size of freshman classes four years earlier.

5. Oswego "peaked-out" in the increase in degrees granted between 1972 and 1973 while the rest of SUNY and the entire state seemed to fluctuate from year to year; sometimes increasing, then sometimes decreasing.

6. Oswego serves well students who transfer here from other SUNY units. By inference, we can conclude that a large proportion of such transfers, mostly from two year schools, manage to complete degree requirements fairly quickly.

[2]See report from this office, "Students Who Withdrew from Oswego," May, 1977.

Recommendation

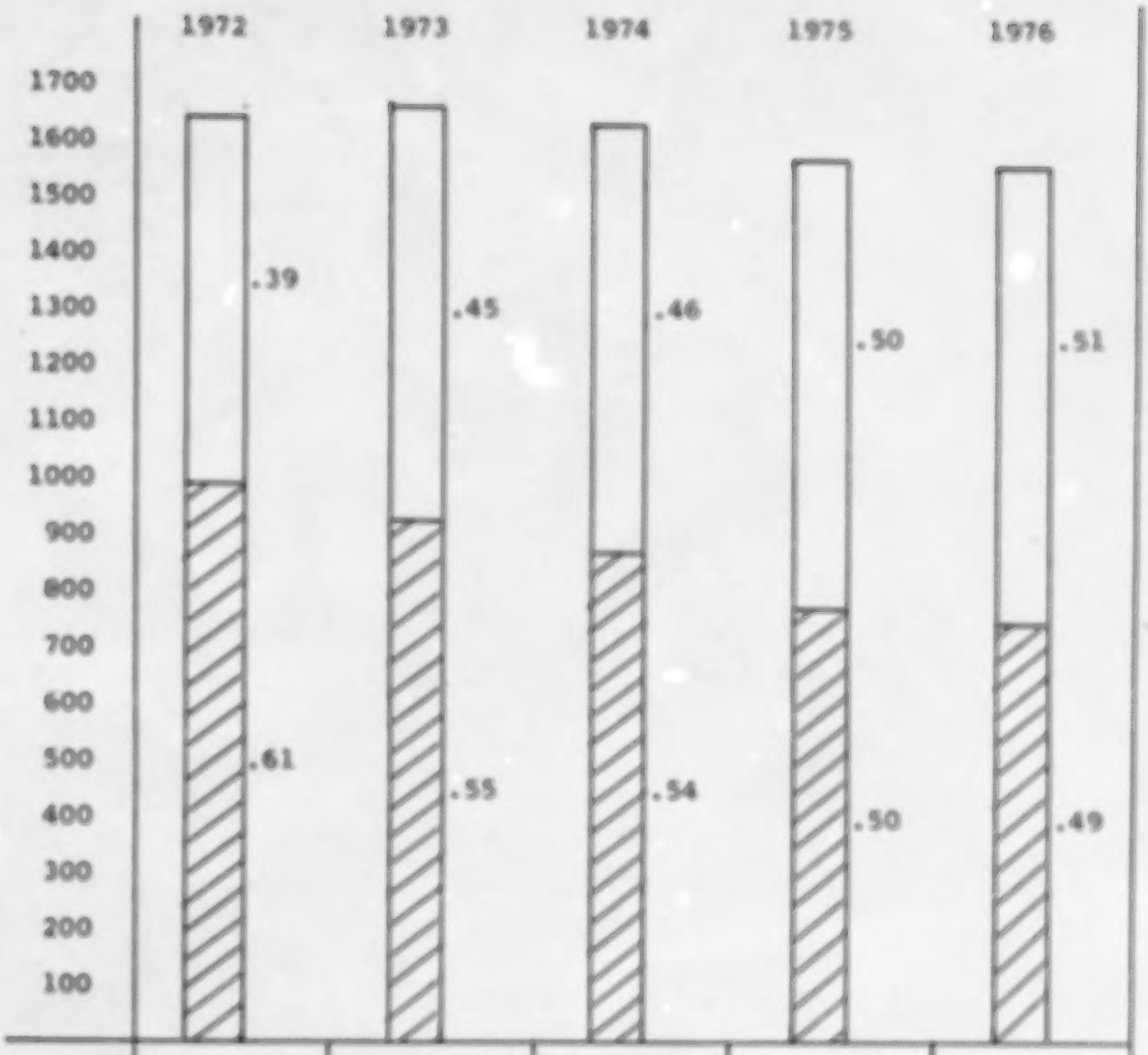
This study attempted to shed some light on changes in undergraduate degree production at Oswego. It has shown that the College has moved steadily toward becoming a multipurpose liberal arts college. It also serves a sizeable number of students who begin their post high school careers in community, and agricultural and technical units of SUNY.

The facts laid out here suggest that we should recognize the importance our students place in the academic areas listed under the section headed "Steady and Growing Programs." At the same time it seems wise to attend to the special needs of students who transfer here. They represent a sizeable proportion of our full-time undergraduate population. They have also enabled us to maintain a respectable degree production rate.

It seems we ought to recognize that Oswego is serving two principal functions: 1) An entry-type institution for large numbers of freshmen and 2) a terminal degree school for substantial numbers of students who entered college in a two year school, were successful and chose Oswego because of its programs, and certain other desirable features.

FIGURE 1

Bachelor's Degrees Granted During
Years Ending June, 1972-76



	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
TOTAL	1649	1655	1620	1564	1544
A & S	650	752	746	777	782
P. S.	999	903	874	787	762

TABLE 1

Bachelor's Degrees Granted During
Years Ending June, 1972-76

Arts & Sciences Division

Major	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1972-76 Diff.	Prop. Change	Total 5 Years
Amer. Studies	8	16	12	13	6	(2)	(.25)	55
Anthropology	14	21	24	22	15	1	.07	96
Art	42	43	51	46	42	0	.00	224
Biology	33	49	53	56	77	44	1.33	268
Chemistry	19	8	19	12	18	(1)	(.05)	76
Commun. St.	--	--	32	40	55	*	*	127
Computer Sci.	12	21	31	31	32	20	1.67	127
Economics	52	65	35	20	13	(39)	(.75)	185
English	72	78	54	57	56	(16)	(.22)	317
French	20	12	11	15	14	(6)	(.30)	72
Geography	0	11	12	7	13	13	*	43
Geology	7	5	4	6	6	(1)	(.14)	28
German	7	13	4	2	5	(2)	(.28)	31
History	54	50	64	44	41	(13)	(.24)	253
Linguistics	6	3	6	10	2	(4)	(.67)	27
Mathematics	32	40	25	41	15	(17)	(.53)	153
Meteorology	0	3	5	12	10	10	*	30
Music	15	7	9	14	19	4	.27	64
Philosophy	3	5	2	7	7	4	1.33	24
Philo./Psych.	--	--	--	1	0	*	*	1
Physics	7	7	1	3	4	(3)	(.43)	22
Pol. Sci.	35	62	56	53	43	8	.23	249
Psychology	84	89	103	94	113	29	.35	483
Pub. Justice	--	--	3	24	63	*	*	90
Russian	3	5	3	1	2	(1)	(.33)	14
Social Sci.	34	36	30	35	21	(13)	(.38)	156
Sociology	51	54	57	71	40	(11)	(.22)	273
Spanish	12	10	16	10	17	5	.42	65
Speech/Thtr.	21	37	13	1	2	**	--	74
Tchr. Speech	7	2	0	5	0	(7)	(1.00)	14
Theatre	--	--	11	18	16	*	*	45
Zoology	--	--	--	6	12	*	*	18
TOTAL	650	752	746	777	779	+132	+.20	3704
PROP. CHANGE		.16	(.01)	.04	.01			

* Cannot be calculated
** Program phased out after 1972
Parenthesis = negative figure

TABLE 2

Bachelor's Degrees Granted During
Years Ending June, 1972-76

Professional Studies Division

Major	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1972-76 Diff.	Prop. Change	Total 5 Years
Business Adm.	--	--	50	93	176	*	*	327
Elem. Educ.	498	411	367	318	247	(251)	(.50)	1841
Indus. Arts	182	199	190	192	188	6	.03	959
Sec. Ed. -Bio	23	19	14	12	11	(12)	(.52)	79
Chem	5	6	2	0	3	(2)	(.40)	16
E Sc	10	12	4	4	3	(7)	(.70)	33
Eng	70	65	59	33	15	(55)	(.79)	242
Fren	21	7	13	8	4	(17)	(.81)	53
Germ	1	6	3	0	2	1	1.00	12
Math	44	34	41	24	15	(29)	(.66)	158
Phys	2	1	3	1	1	(1)	(.50)	8
S St	60	74	48	39	18	(42)	(.70)	239
Span	13	20	13	14	6	(7)	(.54)	66
Voc-Tech.	70	49	51	49	44	(26)	(.37)	263
N-9 Eng	--	--	--	--	13	*	*	13
Math	--	--	--	--	5	*	*	5
Sci	--	--	--	--	5	*	*	5
S St	--	--	--	--	6	*	*	6
TOTAL	999	903	874	787	762	(237)	(.24)	4325
PROP. CHANGE		(.10)	(.03)	(.10)	(.03)			

* Cannot be calculated

TABLE 3

Proportional Numbers of Bachelor's Degrees
Between Divisions Over Five Years

	TOTAL		1972		1973		1974	
	No.	Prop.	No.	Prop.	No.	Prop.	No.	Prop.
TOTAL	8029	1.00	1649	1.00	1655	1.00	1620	1.00
A & S	3704	.46	650	.39	752	.45	746	.46
P. S.	4325	.54	999	.61	903	.55	874	.54

	1975		1976	
	No.	Prop.	No.	Prop.
TOTAL	1564	1.00	1541	1.00
A & S	777	.50	779	.51
P. S.	787	.50	762	.49

TABLE 4

Proportional Changes in Bachelor's Degrees
Granted Over Five Years, Between Years 1972 and 1976

		1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
Number Degrees		1649	1655	1620	1564	1544
Prop. C ange	OSWEGO	+.004	(.021)	(.035)	(.01)	
	SUNY	+.10	+.05	(.03)	+.05	
	STATE	+.09	+.02	+.04	--	

NOTE: Figures taken from Table 16, p. 40 of The Higher Educational System of New York State, The State Educ. Dept., March, 1976 and Trends in Enrollment and Degrees Granted, Report No. 7-77, Central Staff Office of Institutional Research, SUNY, March, 1977.

TABLE 5

Proportional Sources of In-Transfers
to University Colleges, Fall, 1974

Receiving College	SOURCE COLLEGE TYPE					NUMBER TRANSFERS	% OF FT ENROLL.
	SUNY	SUNY 2 YEAR	UNY SENIOR	NON-SUNY N.Y. STATE	OTHER		
Brockport	.79	.69	.08	.12	.11	1194	.16
Buffalo	.82	.58	.23	.12	.07	1546	.19
Cortland	.80	.70	.06	.13	.11	530	.11
Fredonia	.70	.62	.07	.15	.16	325	.08
Geneseo	.77	.65	.11	.11	.13	713	.15
New Paltz	.63	.50	.11	.17	.22	714	.16
Old Westbury	.52	.48	.04	.36	.12	220	.22
Oneonta	.74	.64	.11	.14	.11	684	.12
Oswego	.87	.80	.06	.08	.06	844	.12
Plattsburg	.72	.49	.22	.15	.14	759	.16
Potsdam	.68	.57	.11	.17	.15	361	.09
Purchase	.44	.19	.22	.20	.39	188	.12
Empire St.	.49	.30	.16	.36	.18	599	.54
Utica/Rome	.82	.77	.03	.16	.04	411	.83
TOTAL	.75	.60	.13	.14	.13	9088	.15